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SOMETHING NEW ON"ZENE ARTZNEY"?

P/ New studies on old and important subjects always waken in the historian the excitement of expectation. Therefore, the reader anticipates a revelation in Hermann Aupperle's article, "Previously Unnoticed Facts concerning the Printer, the Author, and the Frontispiece (Titelblatt) of Zene-Artzney of the Year 1530." Unfortunately, the only important features of this article are its references and some of the circumstances in the background of the publication of Zene Artzney. Practically all of the reasoning and the resulting conclusions are speculation with rather less likelihood than certainty of truth. The argument is based on assumed peculiarities of the forceps employed and of the chair in which the patient is seated---all of which adds up, in Aupperle's thinking, to demonstrating that the operator represented is meant to portray the anonymous author.

Among the more likely speculations is that the several faults in the first edition (1530) are due to unfavorable circumstances under which the publisher worked and not to bungling upon the part of the author. There is nothing unlikely either in the conclusion that the author is a man of considerable learning---the marginal notes and textual references should long ago have shown that.

Earlier this year, the editor of the Bulletin had occasion (in the March 1959 number) to point out that speculation is not historical fact. The dictum of those masters of historical method, Langlois and Seignibos, holds now as it did 75 years ago:No facts,no history. There is danger even if the writer guards his speculations by indicating their character. Where the speculator says, "It might very well have been," his copyist will often say, "It was indubitably so." In dental history there is the famous instance of Audibrand's speculation (1821) resulting from Fauchard's use of jeweler's enamel for dentures, that he made dentures of porcelain. Many a successor of Audibrand's declared on the latter's authority that the celebrated 18th century French dentist did introduce the dental use of porcelain.

All that Aupperle's article yields is some very unlikely hypotheses and disappointment.

PLANS FOR A HISTORY OF DENTISTRY IN TEXAS

P/ Dr. Walter C. Stout, chairman of the History Committee of the Texas Dental Association, in his annual report suggests 28 topics for a proposed outline for a history of dentistry in Texas. Dearth of interest has been the stumbling block preventing an earlier writing of this state history (Bulletin Dec. 1953)

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* * James T. Ginn, dean of the Tennessee Dental School, and a member of the A.A.H.D., died suddenly Oct. 31.

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* * This number was issued in Dec. 1959.